CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

CD/1568
4 February 1999

Original: ENGLISH

CANADA

Proposal concerning CD action on nuclear disarmament

Canada renews its proposal that:

- the CD establish an ad hoc committee for the substantive discussion of nuclear disarmament issues with a view to identifying if and when one or more such issues might be negotiated multilaterally.

BACKGROUND

- Nuclear disarmament issues continue to be a priority preoccupation of the global community.

- This was recognized by the CD in the statement made by its President on March 26, 1998, in which agenda item 1 entitled "Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament" was emphasized as "an extremely high priority".

- The nuclear-weapon States have a particular responsibility in this regard and have committed themselves to "the determined pursuit ... of systematic and progressive efforts to reduce nuclear weapons globally, with the ultimate goal of eliminating those weapons, ...".

- This does not however preclude the interests of other members of the international community in the achievement of that objective. There is a clear need for renewed momentum and progress.

- The CD, as the multilateral negotiating mechanism on disarmament issues, should be appropriately and substantively engaged on nuclear disarmament issues.

- Canada does not consider that the CD should be mandated to negotiate nuclear weapon reductions per se or specific operational issues concerning such weapons.

- The CD should establish a mechanism through which it can be more aware of issues and developments in the nuclear disarmament field, can express views on developments therein, and can identify and explore issues which could be negotiated at an appropriate point by a multilateral mechanism.

- The CD has negotiated one such instrument, i.e. the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, in the recent past; it has initiated the process by which it can make a further contribution by the negotiation of a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty.

- Canada urges early action by the CD in response to this proposal as well as to those by other CD members.

GE.99-60058